

D#23C RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORT

SUMMARY: This Supplemental Staff Report provides responses to issues that were raised at a Planning Commission meeting regarding amendments to the Renton Municipal Code Development Regulations (Title IV).

General Description

Amend Title IV to revise and include new standards for single-family residential development in the RC, R-1, R-4, and R-8 zones.

Planning Commission Issue: *Establish guidelines as an alternative means for developers to meet the intent of each of the proposed standards.*

Staff Response: Recommended guidelines:

• **Street Character / Site Considerations**

- **Lot Configuration** - Lots shall be configured to encourage variety within the development, as well as, pedestrian orientation.
- **Garages** - Garages shall be located in an area that minimizes the presence of the garage and so that the garage is not the dominant visual element. Garage doors shall not be located at the end of view corridors. Lots that take access directly from a neighborhood street shall require a layout that lessens the visual impact of the garage doors. Shared garages shall be within an acceptable walking distance to the housing unit it is intended to serve.
- **Primary Entry** - Front doors shall face the street and be on the façade closest to the street. Where a home is located on a corner lot (i.e. at the intersection of two roads or the intersection of a road and a common space), a wrapped porch is preferred to reduce the perceived scale of the house and engage the street or open space on both sides.
- **Scale and Bulk** - Neighborhoods shall have an established hierarchy of building bulk with a visually identifiable primary form that is accented by secondary forms. Porch plates should be low when porches are located adjacent to pedestrian access routes.
- **Façade Modulation** - Dwellings shall include articulation along public frontages; the articulation may include the connection of an open porch to the building, a dormer facing the street, or a well-defined entry element.
- **Fenestration** - Divided light windows are encouraged. They must either be true divided light or have properly proportioned mullions applied to the window. Individual panes must be vertically proportioned or square. Front doors shall be a focal point of the dwelling and be in scale with the home.

• **Architectural Character**

- **Architectural Style** - Neighborhoods shall have a variety of home sizes and character.
- **Roofs** - Roofs shall represent a variety of forms and profiles that add character and relief to the landscape of the neighborhood. The use of bright colors, as well as, roofing that is made of reflective material, gravel, and red tile is discouraged.

- **Eaves** - Eaves should be detailed and proportioned to complement the architectural style of the home.
- **Architectural Detailing** - Architectural detail shall be provided that is appropriate to the architectural character of the home. Columns, trim, and corner boards shall reflect the architectural character of the house.
- **Materials and Color** - Diversity of materials shall be used on homes to provide variety. A diversity of color shall be used on homes, as compared with monotonous shades of beige and grey, throughout the community.

Planning Commission Issue: *Should the design guidelines be required for short plats and/or infill development?*

Staff Response: Staff recommends the design guidelines apply to all plats, regardless of the number of homes being platted. A significant amount of the single-family development activity in the City is as short plats and infill development. The cumulative impacts of not applying design guidelines to single-family development would be likely to perpetuate the negative perception many neighborhoods have about new development that appears monotonous. There are many areas in the City where the amount of vacant acreage that is sizeable enough to accommodate a full subdivision is very limited. Many communities will likely only experience short plats and/or infill development. It is important that the benefits of residential design guidelines not be limited to neighborhoods with substantial vacant and redevelopable land.

Planning Commission Issue: *Should short plats and/or infill development be required to consider the architectural style and colors of the pre-existing homes abutting them and comply with the applicable design requirements?*

Staff Response: In order to ensure that the benefits of residential design standards are fully realized, it recommended that abutting pre-existing homes be considered in the application of the architectural style and color standards. Color and architectural character are very important elements in trying to achieve variety, the color and style of the existing homes should not be disregarded.

Planning Commission Issue: *If the intent of the option of providing two differing siding materials as an option is to have varied color, that is not specified.*

Staff Response: The option shall read: "Two differing siding materials of two differing colors (horizontal siding + shingles, siding + masonry or masonry-like material, etc.) One alternative siding material must comprise a minimum 30% of the street facing façade and wrap the corners no less than 24 inches".